

Series III
Speeches and
Writings,
1942-1967

Box 17, Folder 7

1943-1944

0331

U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

30 September 1945

ADDRESS TO THE SHIP'S COMPANY

1. We are now leaving as part of a bombardment expedition to bombard WAKE. WAKE, if you will remember, is a coral atoll about 2,000 miles to the Southward and Westward of PEARL HARBOR. It was originally in our hands and was used as a stopover by the Pan-American Airways. It was captured by the Japanese in December 1941 after a most gallant defense by the United States Marines.
2. To meet this enemy in combat is a privilege which most of us have long hoped for, but which many of us feared might never materialize. Many ships, even in this Pacific Fleet, have not, as yet, made contact with the enemy.
3. Although we are not long removed from the Navy Yard we are, nevertheless, in unusually fine shape. Our anti-aircraft gunnery performance has been surprisingly good and our main battery performance has been equally fine. Our engineering department has run three full power trials during the past month and has successfully completed all of them. Prior to the war one full power trial per year was considered a difficult test! Our watertight integrity has been thoroughly tested and has been made tight by both ship and navy yard.
4. Therefore, insofar as the material factors of war go, we are in as good a condition as we could hope for or expect at this time.

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U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

5. The only factor to success which has not as yet been finally tested is ourselves. For, in the brilliant crucible of war, the only test of a man is his ability to stand up in combat. How does he act when adversity seems to be around him --- When he sees his fellow shipmates giving their all for those at home --- when the noise of action drowns the semblance of a thought? If he comes through this ordeal he comes through a man worthy of his citizenship.

6. They tell a story of Theodore Roosevelt -- of how he was directed by a badman one night at a bar in a frontier saloon to "buy drinks for the crowd". He realized then and there that his future on the frontier hinged upon what he did -- and so, without more ado, although unarmed himself, he knocked the badman down -- gun and all. Before this, because he wore glasses, he had been called disparagingly, "four eyes". After this he was called "old four eyes" which was an entirely different matter.

7. In a few days we will - at least the majority of us will - be in exactly the same status as was Theodore Roosevelt. Are we going to be called "four eyes" or "old four eyes" by our shipmates? Well, I'm not worried about this! A goodly portion of us have been through the same test - that of the Battle of Lunga Point when our good ship was torpedoed. Then and there this ship's company showed that true hearts beat in true breasts.

8. Young America has never flinched in this war! It has met all calls, even that of death itself with a smiling face and a boundless courage.

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U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

You shipmates who have been through "hell" need not worry about the rest of us. To you I say "Those of us who haven't been there yet will be there soon and we will not be found wanting! We will bear high the tradition of your gallant ship and we will make it our gallant ship also! We will be worthy of our nation's trust!"

9. Men, I'm proud to command this fine ship and this fine crew, and I'm honored to lead you against the enemy. Let our motto ever be "For God and Country" and keeping this before us we can never fail. Then like the Apostle Paul of old we can say "we have fought the good fight - we have finished the course - we have kept the faith".

10. From now on let every man be alert - let every heart beat strong - let every eye be clear - make every shell meet its mark - for victory must and will be ours.


R. W. BATES.

0334

1 October 1943

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SHIP'S COMPANY:

1. We are in a war! A bloody murderous war! We are heading, as I told you yesterday, towards Japanese territory where we have a bombardment mission. There is every reason to expect that the fact that we have started is known to our enemy. There is every reason to expect that we may be attacked at any time by submarine or air. And yet the fact that this is so does not seem to have penetrated as yet into the minds of a large part of the ship's personnel.
2. Yesterday we were warned by one of the radar guard ships that an unidentified plane was in our area. The fact that it turned out to be a friendly plane is beside the point. The Officer-of-the-Deck directed that the anti-aircraft defense be alerted. What happened! The most lackadaisical performance in the world! Some guns did not alert at all - others alerted but failed to remove the gun covers or the muzzle bags - some alerted half-heartedly.
3. Men, I cannot be more serious in my demand that "all hands" get themselves on a war footing. We are no longer in San Francisco or Mare Island. We are in enemy waters. Every effort will be made to ease the strain on you when it can be done but when you are called to battle stations you must go on the double, with a will, and with understanding. Let there be no mistake about that. Your life, the lives of your shipmates, the safety of your ship, all hinge on your immediate, courageous, intelligent action. Lookouts must be alert, gun crews must be efficient, military discipline must prevail.
4. We were caught napping at Pearl Harbor. We will not be caught napping in the MINNEAPOLIS.


R. W. BATES,
Captain, U. S. Navy,
Commanding.

0335

U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

MEMORANDUM TO THE SHIP'S COMPANY:

1. Yesterday was a big day in the lives of all of us. To many it was the first time that we had been under fire - to others it was a reintroduction to the combats of a year ago. To all of us it was a dedication of ourselves to the job in hand - to the destruction of Japanese might and all that it stands for - and, in that dedication, we laid an important cornerstone with the pounding we gave Wake.
2. The performance of our ship yesterday was very impressive. The effect of our gunfire was devastating and wrecked a considerable amount of important Japanese property. This, added to the aerial bombardment, must have set Wake back on its heels for some time to come.
3. What made our gunfire so effective? The answer presents itself, i.e. "Nothing but constant drill along sound lines and high morale". This drill was not confined to our guns alone but included the entire fire control party, the C.I.C., Plot, Radio, Optical, the spotting personnel including the aviators, the radar crews, the bridge force including signal and ship control parties, the engineer and damage control parties. Every man of every one of the above crews had to contribute his share to the common success. Efficiency, in a ship, is an inter-departmental closely related affair where efficiency everywhere is necessary for success anywhere. So when we see the guns shoot well, although we instinctively commend the gunners, let us not forget that each and every one of us had a share in that success, no matter how small it may appear.

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U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

4. This "high" morale is an intangible but it means willingness to do a job no matter how hard, willingness to face the worst for a cause, understanding, enthusiastic^{ly} pride. It makes or breaks human beings as well as ships. It is a priceless possession in any person or ship. That we have it in quantity was evident yesterday. Let us ever maintain it so!

5. In commenting, as I have, on the efficiency of our ship, I do not wish to convey the impression that we are perfect. For, as all of us know, we are, as yet, far from that goal. But yesterday indicated that we are on our way and clearly pointed out our frailties so that through more drill and training we will be able to surmount them.

6. To indicate the attitude of our Admiral concerning the performance of Cruiser Division Six which includes the MINNEAPOLIS, I have pleasure in quoting the following despatch:

"The Group Commander expresses his great appreciation to all Captains, officers and men, for their cooperation and effectiveness in the operation of yesterday."

7. May I add to this also my appreciation of a gallant crew and of a fine ship. The best thing that I can say to you is "Tare Victor George" which in the parlance of the signal flags means "Well Done".

R. W. BATES,
Captain, U. S. Navy,
Commanding.

0337

U.S.S. MINNEAPOLIS

10 November 1943.

ANNOUNCEMENT TO SHIP'S COMPANY

1. We are now headed on a new operation somewhat similar to the Wake operation. However this operation differs from the Wake operation in that whereas at Wake it was merely "to hit and run", this time it is "to seize and hold".
2. We are scheduled to capture three of the Gilbert Islands which are atolls just south of the Marshalls. One of these islands is Makin and it is with that island that our own force is concerned. Makin is a small atoll just north of Tarawa and about 200 miles south of Mille in the Marshalls. For this purpose we have a very powerful naval and air force plus a strong landing force of Marines and Army. You probably noted, last week, that all of our training was along the line of the so-called amphibious operations - that is, troops were landed from transports via landing boats and the landing was covered by the guns of the ships and by the bombs and guns of the planes.
3. Our job will be somewhat different from what it was at Wake. Here we will go in close to the beach and will shell the beach so that the troops may land without undue losses. In this connection the Minneapolis may take pride in the fact that the Marines have requested that this cruiser, alone of the cruisers, be the one designated to fire the so called "called" fires which require extreme accuracy of gunnery because the shells must fall just ahead of the troops.
4. The duty of air is to keep enemy planes away from the transports and from the combatant ships covering the landing. This includes the Minneapolis. The Air Commander has promised that no enemy air will get through. I plan to hold him to that promise.
5. I know that everyone in the ship's company is glad to get underway again and to be a part once more, of an important operation. Being a part of important operations has always been the lot of our good ship and we today are privileged to carry the "torch" which others have so nobly carried in the past.
6. I feel confident that we will make the Japanese regret our presence and that, by the capture of these islands, we will move in a large way towards eventual victory. I congratulate you on your opportunity.

/s/ R. W. BATES,
Captain, U.S. Navy,
Commanding.

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U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

19 November 1943

ADDRESS TO SHIP'S COMPANY:

1. Tomorrow will be another historical moment for all of us. For tomorrow is the day when this task force which we have been steaming and training with for the past three weeks will capture Makin Island.
2. Our people have been patiently waiting for this offensive and aggressive action on the part of the Navy for quite a long time now and I know that our success will hearten every one at home. I think that they will be particularly gratified when they discover that the landing troops are entirely from our sister service - the Army.
3. As a matter of information, this force does not contain all of the naval units that are to assist us at Makin. Oh! No! Instead, in various areas around us, are located carrier and land based air striking units which even today are hitting hard at any enemy bases which might interfere with the successful accomplishment of our task. So you can readily see that you are not alone but a part of a goodly company of fighting ships, planes and men.
4. The biggest and most important factor of these three is "men". For it is the spirit of the men - their fighting character and heart - which brings victory or defeat.
5. Men, I have no feeling about that at all. For I saw you at Wake and you saw yourselves! You saw shells fall over us and short of us - you even saw our planes shot down beside us - you saw how each and every one reacted. You were proud of yourselves, and so was I!
6. Well, tomorrow's operation is even more important than the Wake operation. For tomorrow we seize land! War can, in the end, only be won by the seizure of land for "land is the natural habitat of man". So you can see we are now on the way to victory!
6. → 7. What wouldn't our brothers and comrades in arms give to be in our shoes tomorrow. For we are the favored ones! Let us show by our conduct that we deserve the honor of being with the selected "shock troops" in this great amphibious operation, and let us look forward, therefore, to that moment of battle when we will prove ourselves, by force of arms, the superior of Nippon's best!
8. And lastly let me give you the Admiral's message. This is it. Tell the men that I have great confidence in my pet flagship.
9. Men! With such a leader, and with confidence in ourselves, we cannot fail.

R. W. BATES
Captain, U. S. Navy,
Commanding.

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U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

2 December 1943

ADDRESS TO THE SHIP'S COMPANY:

✓ 1. Men, we are on our way again. Our task this time, however, will be somewhat different from our last two tasks. If you will recollect you will remember what I stressed before Makin - that is, that whereas Wake was to "hit and run", Makin was "to seize and hold". Well, our new task varies to a degree from the Wake affair, and yet again it also is to "hit and run". At Wake we not only bombed the Japanese from the air, but we bombarded them from the sea. In our new task we bomb them from the air only, and the surface ships act solely as support ships to the carriers. So this time we will probably not see our target at all. The most that we may see is Japanese planes.

✓ 2. I know that you are wondering where we are going and who is going with us. Well, I'll tell you. We are going to attack from the air the great Japanese base called "Roi" by some and "Ruotto" by others, located on the northern end of Kwajalein Atoll, and which is as large as our Ford Island at Pearl Harbor. We hope to pretty well smash this base and any ships that may be located there before the Japanese, in return, can do much to us. However, any way we look at it, all of us may be in a fight before we get out of that area again.

3. In connection with this base of Roi, it is of interest to recollect that it was this very base that Admiral Halsey's forces struck in February 1942 when the Navy made its first appearance after Pearl Harbor by attacking the Marshalls. So I would say that "Roi" and our Navy are not unknown to one another.

4. And now as to who is going with us. If you will look around you will see our task group with three carriers and five cruisers, plus destroyers - If you will look just over the horizon you will see another task group composed of units almost identical to ours. These two task groups then, are our Striking Force and constitute what I believe to be the most powerful task group ever gathered together under our flag, or any other flag. This is America of today, men - the air power - the cruisers - the destroyers; all of these represent our Nation - power and speed gathered together in one unit for the preservation of our liberties.

5. Men, I congratulate you on being once again selected as shock troops; on being among these fortunate ones chosen for this all important assignment; but most of all because of this wonderful opportunity to face the enemy which you have gained for yourselves. I know that you will do the same swell job as always; I know that you are real fighting men, and I know that when all is successfully over, all of us will be mutually proud of one another.

R. W. BATES,
Captain, U. S. Navy,
Commanding.

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U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

6 December 1943.

ADDRESS TO THE SHIP'S COMPANY:

1. Now that we have completed our second operation - that of the bombardment of Kwajalein (Roi) and Wotje, our first one was the capture of Makin - I thought that it might be well to tell you something about what we accomplished.

2. In the first place, as Admiral Nimitz has repeatedly said, we are on our way across the Japanese Mandates. This is the all embracing name given to that group of islands which most of you know as the Marshalls and the Carolines. Most of these Mandated islands are atolls, although several of them, notably Kusaie and Ponape, are mountainous.

3. There are two large principal air bases in the Marshalls. These are located at Roi (Kwajalein) and at Maloelab. Both of these can handle several hundred land based airplanes, and many seaplanes and float type fighters. It was evidently decided that a blow at one or both of these bases, as well as at Wotje, would have a very disconcerting effect on the Japanese. Therefore, Kwajalein and Wotje were chosen, and men, as a result we shared in an epic adventure!

4. Let us examine what we did! We took our two large task groups right through the Japanese aircraft and surface ship screens without being detected, and we did this for at least 600 miles. We hit them on Saturday morning a most devastating blow with our concentrated aircraft. They were caught by complete surprise. Then we retired and struck at Wotje on our return journey.

5. That the Japs were mad is plainly evidenced by the great measures that they took to give us some damage. They commenced making torpedo attacks on us day and night, beginning at noon on Saturday and ending at about 0200 on Sunday morning - a total time of 14 hours, of which about 8 hours were full of dynamite. It is my modest guess that no force at sea has been subjected to such strong attacks over so long a time. Our damage was relatively light as you already know - the principal damage being the torpedoing of the LEXINGTON.

6. What did we do to the Japs?

From: CTG 50.1

Incomplete returns today's action 26 Zekes, 10 Bettys, 16 float planes and 6 visiting Kates. 2 CL, 1 AO, 5 AK torpedoed, bombed and believed destroyed. 1 AP severely damaged. Hangars Wotje destroyed. Report from Task Group 50.3 not received. Our personnel losses 2 VF, 1 VB, one man killed San Francisco during engagement. Operative accident Cowpens 1 officer, 2 enlisted men killed. Regret our casualties. Congratulations on a fine job. Well done.

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U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

From: CTG 50.3

Rough box score follows. Sent to bottom 3 AK weighing roughly 10,000 tons each. Hits on 2 CL's heavy damage. Knocked off in air 7 Zekes. Caught on water 2 Emily and 6 float jobs. Unknown number Bettys strafed and bombed. Hits on ramp and hangar areas.

This is a total of:

<u>Planes</u>	<u>Ships</u>
33 Zekes	4 CL
10 Bettys	8 AK
2 Emilys (flying boat)	1 AO (Oiler)
22 Float planes (fighters)	1 AP (Transport)
TOTAL <u>78</u> (also unknown number strafed)	<u>14</u>

7. Thus you can see men that you have shared in a glorious adventure. That you did your full share efficiently and courageously goes without saying, for if you had done badly "the Japs would have got you". So here's my congratulations and my commendation to a gallant crew on a gallant ship.

8. We are now on a new operation - the escorting of the fine aircraft carrier LEXINGTON to Pearl. We arrive at Pearl about 0800, Thursday, 9 December.

R. W. BATES,
Captain, U.S. Navy,
Commanding.

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U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

23 January 1944.

ADDRESS TO SHIP'S COMPANY:

1. Men - we are on our way once more. We are not only on our way from Pearl Harbor, which is a pleasure to everyone, but we are in fact on our way to capture real Japanese territory. And when I say real, I mean just that.

2. You may say to this, "What were we doing at Guadalcanal and New Georgia and the Gilberts? Wasn't that Japanese territory?" The answer to that is definitely "no" for the Japanese have been in the above mentioned islands for only about one and one-half years at the most, having captured them from the British and Australians. The islands or atolls that we are going to capture have been in Japanese hands for twenty-five years. This is because, as a result of the Treaty of Versailles which ended the last World War, certain of the former German islands of the Pacific were given to certain powers to govern and be responsible for to the other powers but not to own. The Japanese were given the Marshall and the Caroline Islands. How our government allowed this to occur has never been fully explained, but it is believed in Washington that everyone at that time was so tired of war that they thought it wouldn't make any difference who got what. They believed that war was over for many years - and anyway, the Japanese were an "honorable and trustworthy people." That this was dreadfully wrong is now apparent to all, for the reason we are underway today is to capture certain atolls of the Marshalls which the Japanese, contrary to their plighted word, have been heavily fortifying for the past 20 years. We need these islands as air bases to assist in the further capture of Japanese territory to the westward and eventually to help in the destruction of Japan itself.

3. The point that I wish to stress in all of the above discussion is this - that this will be the first Japanese territory to be captured by any power for hundreds of years. The Marshalls and Carolines are not really Japanese but they have been in Japanese hands so long, and have been so heavily fortified by them, as to be now considered by all nations as Japanese. So, men, when we have captured these atolls we will have had the great honor and privilege of being the first nation to conquer Japanese territory, not only in this war, but in any modern war. We are the shock troops who will blast the Japanese empire!

4. Now, you say, so far so good - but what are these islands or atolls that we are going to capture? That is a fair question but it is one which I cannot release until later - suffice is to say that these islands are now called Porcelain and Camouflage, and are part of a large and important atoll called Carillon. These are not the real names but are the nicknames given them by the Commander-in-Chief for security reasons. Before we arrive near our destination I will give you the real names.

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U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

23 January 1944.

5. On the way to Carillon atoll we are going to bombard an airfield on an island nicknamed Daughter Island. This is for the purpose of making our job the next day at Porcelain Island much easier.

6. Although you cannot see all of the ships and planes which are going to do this job, I want you to know that we have with us the most powerful force ever to operate under the American flag. If I could tell you the exact number of ships and men, I feel sure that any qualms you might have would be quickly dissipated. I cannot tell you because I don't know myself, but I can assure you that it is extraordinarily powerful. When we go on operations we plan to succeed.

7. A few days from now I plan to set up in the hangar a model of both of the islands that we are going to work out on - Daughter and Porcelain. These models will be for your information. There will be an officer there to explain all about them. I know that you will find this highly interesting.

8. As I have said prior to each operation, I haven't much worry about it. In each one to date the performance of this ship has met all expectations. Your conduct in battle has been truly inspirational. I'm proud of you and you have every right to be proud of yourselves. I know that after this operation has been completed you will be able to look at each other and say, "There goes a man!"

R.W. BATES,
Captain, U. S. Navy,
Commanding.

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U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

26 January 1944.

ADDRESS TO SHIP'S COMPANY

1. From now on we will be in enemy waters and therefore all lookouts will have to be vigilant - especially for torpedo wakes.
2. We should be within range of enemy search aircraft from Daughter Island on the 28th - that is two days from now. That will put an increased pressure on our radar operators and on our lookouts.
3. Once we make contact - probably the 29th of January - we may find ourselves subjected to air attacks at almost any time as we will then be less than 300 miles from Daughter Island.
4. From that time on we may expect to be at general quarters or air defense quite frequently and we may have to assume condition one easy for long periods.
5. All of this will interfere with our meal hours, and our sleep hours, and we may not have much hot food to eat for as much as several days. I will do the best I can to see to it that you get the best break possible in this, but there isn't a man on board who would prefer to eat normally, if, by so doing, the safety of his ship was endangered.
6. I want everyone to get as much sleep as he can until we arrive in the battle area so that if called upon to be awake for rather long periods he will be able to do so without being too fatigued. I remember that the day following the night torpedo attack off Kwajalein Island, half of the ship's company were dead on their feet. That was bad and must not occur again. We must learn to organize ourselves so that a little sleep will carry us a long way. No one must be allowed to poop out.
7. I have assigned several hours a day as rest periods. I want you to actually rest during these periods unless something urgent forces you to do otherwise.
8. War requires people to be fit - you are here because you are all fit - and, I'm counting on you heavily during the coming operations to help me bring our fine ship and ourselves home intact.

R. W. BATES,
Captain, U.S. Navy,
Commanding.

0345

U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

13 February 1944.

address to

MEMORANDUM FOR SHIP'S COMPANY:

Men, I am afraid that most of you do not realize the serious position we are in for, if you did, I would not find you lying about stripped and trying to get some sunburn.

I have inaugurated a rest period on this ship so that you might have a chance to relax from your arduous duties. However, it appears to me as if this rest period was being improperly interpreted. It does not mean a complete collapse - it means a chance to read, to study, to tend to the multifold personal matters which all of us have - but not to completely disarm ourselves in the presence of the enemy. When we are in action we should be fully clothed to prevent burns. If we are stripped, how can we get to our battle stations in that short period of time so essential to success?

I receive letters quite frequently from your mothers concerning you and trusting in me to bring you through. That is what I plan to do and I call upon you to be alert and to help me help you.

Men, you may not realize it, but at the present moment we are only 60 miles from a strong Japanese airbase called Eniwetok. It may have been from here that the planes came which attacked our new acquisition Roi the other night. If there are planes at Eniwetok they may have already spotted us and we may be in for an air attack at any time as these oil tankers are important targets. I am not telling you this to alarm you but to awaken you to the fact that this is a game that is for keeps. There is only one winner and no medals for second place. I intend that we shall be in the winning column and further that we shall assist the Admiral in escorting these tankers safely to their destination.

We fuel tomorrow morning north of Eniwetok and then we are going to drop these tankers and join a powerful raiding force of carriers, new battleships, cruisers and destroyers. We are going on a raid even more dangerous than the one we made on Kwajalein about two months ago. Do you remember that raid when we were attacked by torpedo planes both day and night, and when one of our ships was torpedoed? Well, it is possible that we may run into the same thing again but worse.

The only way that we can come out whole is for every man to do his duty. At night from now on don't fully undress but be ready to answer the bugle call. Get to your battle stations on the double - be ready to fire as soon as possible - get Condition Zebra set rapidly and you will be surprised at the quickness of your report of "ready".

Once again we are "shock troops". Let us live up to our well deserved reputation. We did a wonderful job in our last operation. We will do it again in this one. We can count on the MINNEAPOLIS.

R.W. BATES,
Captain, U.S. Navy, Commanding.

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U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

3 March 1944

ADDRESS TO SHIP'S COMPANY

1. Now that we are returning to Pearl Harbor for what may be a very short stay after a memorable cruise of 12,500 miles, I think that it is well that we look over together what we have done.

2. In the first place, we left Pearl Harbor on 22 January in company with the amphibious forces and headed for Kwajalein Atoll. As we neared the Eastern Marshalls, the MINNEAPOLIS, NEW ORLEANS and SAN FRANCISCO, plus escorting destroyers were detached and ordered to bombard Taroa for about one-half day. We succeeded in our mission there very well, indeed, although most of us will probably always remember those screaming 6-inch shells with which the Japanese greeted us.

3. From Taroa we went to Kwajalein where for a period of roughly 5 days we bombarded Kwajalein Island, and the smaller islands of Ebeye and Guegewe. Our performance here was also of high order and the devastation wrought by our gun fire contributed in no small degree to the capture of the above three islands. I went ashore and examined what I could of Kwajalein, and especially one strongpoint fired at by the MINNEAPOLIS. I can assure you that you had done your job well if this one strongpoint that I saw was any criterion. It was mostly demolished.

4. From Kwajalein we went on the famous trip to Truk. Truk has always been considered the Japanese strongpoint in the Marshalls and Carolines, and the Japanese have always indicated that it was a Gibraltar. Well, you know what happened! We simply pasterd it from the air to such an extent that it was almost safe to go anywhere in the area. So we, in company with the NEW JERSEY, IOWA and NEW ORLEANS, did just that.

We went on a wonderful trip around that great atoll and we had the good fortune and privilege of helping to sink a light cruiser and a destroyer, and to observe the sinking of what appeared to be two patrol craft by our accompanying destroyers. That was a trip!

5. Finally, we were included in the trip to the Marianas - to Saipan and Tinian and Guam - where our aircraft did a splendid job in destroying enemy aircraft there and in sinking and damaging some enemy merchant ships. This trip is memorable for its boldness and for the fact that we attacked even though discovered. Do you remember the night torpedo attacks when our forces shot down about 14 enemy planes, and when we probably got one also? The Japs failed that night for not one of our ships was damaged.

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U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

6. We are now returning to Pearl for a few days repairs and rest, and we will be well received there because we have shared in three important victories on this trip. I want to suggest that we make the best of our time there - that is, when we are on liberty, let us have fun, and when we are working, let us do our best to get our good ship in shape for her next action. For she will be in other actions, you may be sure!

And lastly, I want to suggest that all of us be "shipmates" with one another. Let us not go ashore and get drunk and stay overleave. Let us not forget or lose our identification cards.

Let us try and protect our service records so that we may be advanced in rating; so that we may tell our families how well we have done! And you and I both know how anxious our families and friends are to hear just that.

7. Men, you have made an enviable name as "shock troops" and have done exceedingly well, as I have indicated above. Your admiral is proud of you; I am proud of you; you are proud of yourselves; all of us are proud of our good ship - our "Minnie". Let us keep her name flaming forever!

R.W. BATES,
Captain, U.S. Navy,
Commanding.

0348

U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

29 March 1944

ADDRESS TO SHIP'S COMPANY

Men, tomorrow morning we meet the enemy again! This time will not be like Makin, or Taroa, or Kwajalein where we shelled the beaches, but will, instead, be more like Kwajalein when we made that famous attack and were in return attacked by torpedo planes all night - more like Truk - more like Saipan. This is essentially a carrier strike. So you all know approximately what we are going to do and what we may be in for.


The place we are going to attack is the western anchor to the Caroline Islands - a group of islands called Palaus, where, I imagine, we hope to have good fortune similar to that achieved at Truk and Saipan.

Some of you have probably already guessed what our target is - others may be still wondering where the Palaus are. I think that they are rather easy to locate because they are 700 miles south of Guam, and about 400 miles to the northwest of our present position.

I know that we all look forward to an excellent performance by our brethren in the air, and I know that they in turn are looking forward to an excellent performance from us. We have given it to them in the past - we will do so in the future.

Meanwhile, as we near our objective, I want to caution everyone to get as much rest as he can as we may be alerted many times in the next few days by Japanese air power, submarines, and even surface ships. Sleep and food will have to be snatched as the occasion offers. We will do the best we can in this regard.

Best of luck to everyone!


R.W. BATES,
Captain, U.S. Navy,
Commanding.

0349

20 APR 1944

I know that many of you are wondering now where we are going and why. So I thought that I would tell you a little about it.

Our operations this time are very similiar to those we went through last time when we hit the Palau's and Woleai. That is, this operation we are on, from our own position, is essentially a carrier strike. Not merely a strike, mind you, such as we made at Kwajalein that time when we were attacked all night by torpedo planes, but instead, many strikes lasting for a number of days. How long, is up to the Commander, who, knowing what he has to do, will have to determine when he has accomplished his mission.

Our planes are going to attack primarily enemy air fields in Western or Dutch New Guinea. There seem to be a considerable number of these fields so the pilots should not have to look too far for a target. Among these are Wakde, Sawar and Hollandia. We commence our air operations tomorrow morning. As a matter of interest, Western New Guinea is mountainous and has thick forests, crockadiles and poisonous snakes.

Meanwhile, our presence here must be known to the enemy, as we shot down one Betty yesterday about 35 miles from our formation, and another one this morning about 10 miles from our formation. These Betts were evidently snooper planes whose job it is to try and ascertain what we are doing. Also the snooper is supposed to report our course, speed, formation and disposition, our strength in types and the location of the strength and weaknesses in our disposition. He is supposed to report, for example, where the battleships are.

The enemy, now that they have found us, will probably attack us and endeavor to force us to abandon our plan. So from now on at almost anytime, you may hear "air defense" or "general quarters" on the bugle. When you do, go quickly to your stations for the Nation is counting on your keen eyes and courageous hearts to fight your way through to victory.

There may be submarines to destroy or small surface craft, like Pt boats, making attempted torpedo raids during the night, or our old friend, the airplane, may attack us both day and night. So men, we must all be alert from now on! Our job is to protect the carriers so that they may deliver the air assaults on the enemy. This I know we can and will do.

I will tell you tomorrow why we are attacking these airfields and what else we have to do before our job is completely finished and we can return to Majuro.

R. W. BATES
Captain, U. S. Navy,
Commanding.

0350

U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

29 May 1944

ADDRESS TO SHIP'S COMPANY ON DETACHMENT

Men, I have come to say goodbye. And I can assure you that I do so with great regret. We have made a fine team - you and I - and we have, I hope, helped cut a niche in the pistol grip of liberty.

Many of you have been through many battles, among which the most important were the Coral Sea where the Navy stopped Japanese air power, and therefore prevented further aggression to the south, and Tassafaronga where the Minneapolis was torpedoed, but where she and her sisters stopped Japanese supplies into Guadalcanal and finally caused the fall of that island. You were also at Midway.

However, I am concerned, primarily, with the actions in which the Alleycats engaged since leaving Mare Island last year. Listen to our record! It reads like the battle flags of Napoleon:

1. The bombardment of Wake.
2. The assault and capture of Makin in the Gilbert Islands.
3. The bombardment of Taroa in the Marshall Islands.
4. The assault and capture of the Kwajalein Group, Marshall Islands.
5. The assault on Truk, Caroline Group.
6. The circumnavigation of Truk Atoll and action off North Pass where we assisted in sinking one Japanese light cruiser and one destroyer. Men, that was a trip!
7. The assault on Saipan and Tinian, Marianas Islands.
8. The assault on Yap, Woleai and the Palau Islands.
9. The assault and capture of Hollandia, New Guinea, and lastly
10. The assault on Truk and the bombardment of Satawan.

This then is our record since then. And it was accomplished, as all of you know, without the loss of a single man on board by enemy shells or torpedoes. Evidently we were favored by Divine Providence, for enemy shells and torpedoes were close enough to have caused damage had the Creator so willed. I feel confident that under your new Captain this good fortune will ever remain with you so that you will all return to your family and friends once again.

I have come to say goodbye to as fine a body of men as ever trod the deck of an American Man-of-war. I have seen you with shells bursting around you and over you; with torpedoes passing close aboard. Did you flinch, did you quail? You did not. Instead, with your hearts beating true and your eyes firm on the enemy, you gave him hell until he died as the blue waves covered him.

You are a brave and hardy lot, and I leave you with the faith that you will carry on - that the good ship Minneapolis will ever be in at the kill - that victory will be ours in God's good time.

Men, you are about to start on a new operation. What it is I do not fully know, but I do know that it will require your best efforts.

I therefore give to you, to Admiral Joy and to his other gallant Alleycats, the "hunter's toast", "Best of luck and a full bag".

R.W. BATES,
Captain, U.S. Navy.

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